United Nations A/ES-10/PV.37

General Assembly

Emergency Special Session

Official Records

37th meeting
Thursday, 21 December 2017, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Resumption of the tenth emergency special session

The President: I declare the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, on illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory, resumed.

Members will recall that, in paragraph 6 of its resolution ES-10/18, of 16 January 2009, the General Assembly decided

> "to adjourn the tenth emergency special session temporarily and to authorize the President of the General Assembly at its most recent session to resume its meeting upon request from Member States".

In that connection, I should like to draw the attention of delegations to the following: document A/ES-10/769, which contains a letter dated 18 December 2017 from the Permanent Representatives of Turkey and Yemen to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly, requesting the urgent resumption of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly in accordance with the "Uniting for Peace" procedure pursuant to resolution 377 (V), of 1950; and document A/ES-10/771, which contains a letter dated 19 December 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly, also requesting that the tenth emergency special session be resumed as soon as possible.

I intend to conduct the proceedings of this meeting in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and past practice of the tenth emergency special session.

In accordance with rule 63 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the President and Vice-Presidents of the seventy-second session shall serve in the same capacity at the resumed tenth emergency special session.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to decide that the Credentials Committee of the seventy-second session should serve for the resumed tenth emergency special session?

It was so decided (decision ES-10/101 1).

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (Article 19 of the Charter) (A/ES-10/770)

The President: In keeping with established practice, I should now like to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/ES-10/770, concerning Member States that are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in this document?

It was so decided.

The President: In that connection, may I further take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to

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follow the provisions of resolution 72/2, by which the Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe and Somalia are permitted to vote in the General Assembly until the end of its seventy-second session and to also allow these Member States to vote at the emergency special session?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 5 (*continued*)

Illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Draft resolution (A/ES-10/L.22)

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Yemen to introduce draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22.

Mr. Alyemany (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to express our sincere appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly in the light of the sensitive circumstances in our region that constitute a threat to international peace and security, in line with resolution 8221, adopted by the Ministerial Meeting of the Council of the League of Arab States at its extraordinary session held in Cairo on 9 December 2017, and with the holding of the extraordinary session of the Islamic Summit Conference of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, held in Istanbul on 13 December 2017. We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to all States members of the Non-Aligned Movement for supporting the holding of this emergency special session, which is consistent with its firm position on the question of Palestine.

We express our regret over the fact that the United States of America exercised its right to veto in the voting on draft resolution S/2017/1060, submitted by Egypt to the Security Council on behalf of the Arab Group (see S/PV.8139). The draft resolution sought to protect the city of Jerusalem and reject any attempt to change its legal and historical status, which is deeply entrenched in international law. We also condemn the opposition by the United States of America to 14 votes in the Security Council, which represent international consensus on the status of the city of Al-Quds Al-Sharif, in accordance with the principles of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions.

The decision taken by the United States Administration on 6 December 2017 on the status of Jerusalem is considered to be null and void and provides no legal basis for changing the status of occupied Jerusalem. We consider it a blatant violation of the rights of the Palestinian people, the Arab nations and all Muslims and Christians of the world. It is a dangerous violation and breach of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, which provides for the inadmissibility of the acquisition of land by force. It is a serious threat to stability and international peace and security in the region and in the world, not to mention the fact that it undermines any possibility for peace and a two State-solution and serves only to fuel violence and extremism.

East Jerusalem, which is an inseparable part of the land of the State of Palestine, continues to be occupied. We affirm that Palestine has the full right to exercise its sovereignty over all Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem. We therefore call on all States, including the United States of America, not to recognize any measures that run counter to that fact. We ask that they refrain from the establishment of diplomatic missions in the holy city, pursuant to Security Council resolutions and as endorsed by draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22 before us and the General Assembly's position on this question, which it has steadfastly held for many decades.

We strongly condemn all illegal Israeli policies, practices and plans that seek to annex occupied East Jerusalem and to change its Arab identity and demographic composition. We reject all attempts to change the historic and legal status of the Islamic and Christian holy sites in the city, including Al-Haram Al-Sharif. In this regard, we appreciate the role being played by the Kingdom of Jordan, as custodian of the city's holy sites, in providing protection and in opposing all such illegal attempts.

Furthermore, we appreciate the role being played by the Al Quds Committee, led by the Kingdom of Morocco. We also welcome the resolve of the sisterly Palestinian people, who defend their land, holy sites, history and culture against oppression, injustice, aggression and anyone who tries to deny their national right to exist in a holy Arab city.

The Israeli occupation of Arab territories, including Palestinian land, is the root cause of all tension in the region. There will be no security or stability in the region without a solution that does justice to the Palestinian people by granting their legitimate rights

in freedom and dignity and an independent Palestinian State, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Such a solution must be based on the land-for-peace principle and the two-State solution, in accordance with the Madrid terms of reference as well as the Arab Peace Initiative, which has been in existence since 2002 and forms the just basis for a peaceful solution, as agreed today by the international community, including the Security Council.

In its capacity as Chair of the Arab Group for this month, the Republic of Yemen, together with Turkey, as Chair of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, submits to the General Assembly draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22 on the status of the city of Jerusalem, under resolution 377 A (V), "Uniting for Peace". The draft resolution stipulates that any decisions and actions that purport to have altered the character, status or demographic composition of the Holy City of Jerusalem have no legal effect, are completely null and void and must be rescinded in compliance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. In this regard, the draft resolution calls upon all States to refrain from the establishment of diplomatic missions in the Holy City of Jerusalem, pursuant to Security Council resolution 478 (1980).

Moreover, it demands that all States comply with Security Council resolutions on the Holy City of Jerusalem and not recognize any actions or measures contrary to these resolutions. It reiterates its call for the reversal of the negative trends on the ground that are imperilling the two-State solution and for the intensification and acceleration of international and regional efforts and support aimed at achieving, without delay, a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid terms of reference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet road map, and an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967.

We take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude for the great efforts exerted by the sisterly Arab Republic of Egypt in its capacity as the Arab delegation in the Security Council in submitting draft resolution S/2017/1060 to the Council and in promoting the necessary support for it. We thank all Member States that voted in favour of the draft resolution and commend their principled position on the question. We also thank all delegations that sponsored the draft resolution that we submit today for supporting the principles for which the draft resolution stands, which reflects their strong position on the rule of law and the just cause of Palestine.

We call upon all peace-loving countries that truly want peace to stand steadfastly in favour of the rule of law. We ask them to support draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22 and to vote for what is right, to vote for peace, and to vote for stability in the Middle East and the entire world.

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the observer State of Palestine.

Mr. Al-Malki (Palestine) (*spoke in Arabic*): We have called for the resumption of the tenth emergency special session so that the voice of the international community, embodied in the reactions of peoples and countries throughout the world to the vote that took place in the Security Council on draft resolution S/2017/1060 — in which an overwhelming majority confirmed the legal, political, historical status of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and declared that any attempt to change its status would be null and void (see S/PV.8139) — may be heard. We thank the Group of Arab States and the States members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and of the Non-Aligned Movement for calling for this emergency special session after the exercise of the right of veto prevented the Security Council from carrying out its duty in the maintenance of international peace and security, despite the fact that 14 members of the Council supported the draft resolution submitted by Egypt, for which we are grateful.

The General Assembly is now acting within its prerogatives under the Uniting for Peace principles set forth in resolution 377 A (V) and has called for today's emergency session in order to fulfil its responsibilities. This session comes after resolution adopted by the Ministerial Meeting of the Council of the League of Arab States at its extraordinary session held in Cairo, at the request of the State of Palestine as well as of the Kingdom of Jordan, as the guardian of the holy sites in Jerusalem. It also comes pursuant to the extraordinary session of the Islamic Summit Conference of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation held in Istanbul under the chairmanship of Turkey, and in the light of the international consensus on the dangerous nature of the decision taken by the United States of America and its repercussions on peace and security at regional and international levels.

We meet today not because of any animosity towards the United States of America, but because of its decision, which constitutes an aggression against the genuine and natural rights of the Palestinian people, the Arab nations and all the Muslims and Christians of Jerusalem and of the whole world, to the city of Al-Quds Al-Sharif. It is an aggression against the exceptional religious and cultural status of Jerusalem. We hereby affirm that the American decision will have no impact on the status and position of the Holy City in any way whatsoever. Rather, it affects as a matter of course the status of the United States as a mediator of peace, as it has failed the test of Jerusalem despite our warnings and those of the entire world that it should take this test seriously, despite our warnings that the taking of positions and decisions that ignite religious feelings could end the possibility of a political solution and lead to a full-blown religious war that would jeopardize the future of peace.

We cannot help but ask who benefits from this decision. It serves the Israeli Government in implementing its colonial plans. It serves the powers of extremism and terrorism in the region and the world. Who could imagine that there would be any credibility to a peace plan from which Jerusalem is excluded? Is there any credible voice for peace that supported this decision? How has this decision been described by States, regional and political blocs, parliaments and the Secretary-General of the United Nations himself, as well as the Christian and Islamic religious establishments and authorities around the world? Not one has upheld the American decision. Does the United States not wonder why it stands isolated in a position that has been rejected by everyone, near and far, when even its closest allies cannot bear to turn a blind eye to its decision?

The answer is clear. Al-Quds Al-Sharif is the cradle of civilization. It is the land of divine religions, the path of the Prophet, the gateway to heaven, the city of the nativity of Al-Aqsa, which is the first of two points of prayer and the third of the holy mosques. Jerusalem cannot be misrepresented or falsified. It will not fall under any siege or surrender to domination or any form of monopolization. It belongs to the world. It is the key to war as well as the key to peace in the Middle East and the entire world. For these reasons, international law and international consensus are clear on Jerusalem. All States want the special status of Jerusalem as well as the historical status of the holy sites, including Al-Haram Al-Sharif, to be respected and preserved.

Today, the United States is once again squandering an opportunity to reverse its provocative and illegal decision, join the international community and put an end to its isolation. Instead, the United States insists on ignoring the dangerous repercussions of its decision, despite the calls of the international community for it to respect the international law that governs our world, prevents the escalation of conflict and offers a framework of reference for just and peaceful solutions.

The State of Palestine respects the sovereignty of States as long as it is in line with international law. We refuse, however, to see sovereignty being used as an excuse to violate international law and trespass on the rights of our Palestinian people. We have inalienable rights, and no one can deny our right to live on our land.

We and the countries of the world stand here today, united for freedom, for justice, for peace. The veto will not stop us. We will not be threatened. We are facing up to our challenges in reliance upon international law whose judgment we seek. Unlike some, we do not seek advice, information or religious counsel to justify colonialism and the seizure of land by force. Indeed, we wonder how Israel, the occupying Authority, has not yet understood that the States Members of the United Nations represent peoples who for decades suffered under the burden of colonialism, apartheid, oppression, domination and aggression. They know very well the difference between colonialist desires and legitimate aspirations, and they will refuse to allow any justifications for these crimes, whether they be made on security, religious or national grounds.

The hollowness of these justifications has been exposed by the experience and struggle of suffering peoples, and the countries and peoples that have experienced that suffering remain loyal to the Palestinian people. The Palestinian people will not forget the support they have received in their struggle to regain their freedom and attain peace. Moreover, States that have known suffering recognize and understand the rationale for which this international Organization was established, over 70 years ago, in the aftermath of the Second World War. Theirs is a logic that is based on justice and collective will, as embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Our Organization is now facing an unprecedented test, with Palestine in the headlines. All international

frameworks, including the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Human Rights Council, the International Court of Justice and the Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, have agreed on our rights and on the justice of our Palestinian cause. We trust that in voting today States will lean on these firm foundations which themselves are rooted in a logic consistent with the flowering of human civilization.

History records and remembers names. It remembers both the names of those who stand by what is right and the names of those who speak falsehoods. Today, we are seekers of rights and peace, despite the oppression and injustice that has befallen our people — children, women and the elderly. Ours is an oppression that began with the Balfour Declaration 100 years ago, continued with the catastrophe of 70 years ago, through to the occupation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip 50 years ago, to this very day.

Despite our march on the path of the pain for over a century, we never wavered in our will to achieve peace whenever we were given the chance. However, colonialism and peace cannot coexist; those who choose peace must renounce colonialism, and those who choose colonialism are the enemies of peace. Israel is not hiding its policies and intentions. The mediator has decided to take its side and thereby embraces what is wrong and ignores what is right. What is needed now is the formation of a multilateral international mechanism under the auspices of the United Nations, built on the basis of international legitimacy and the frameworks of reference for the Middle East peace process. This mechanism would embody the international will that exists to put an end to occupation and conflict, so that a just, comprehensive and lasting peace could be achieved and the security and peace of all peoples in the region guaranteed.

The peace process is not the exclusive property of one party, and the question of Palestine is the responsibility of the international community as a whole, including the United Nations, if we are to achieve a just solution that would fully guarantee the rights of the Palestinian people without depending on the intentions of the international community or the occupying Power. No State should use the support for dialogue as an excuse to manipulate others or dodge responsibilities and duties under international law. No State can ignore the illegitimate status quo that Israel has engendered or fail to contribute to the continuation of this process. The peace process must distinguish between the occupied territories and the occupying Power. It must hold accountable those who commit and perpetrate violations. It must support the Palestinian people in their just struggle to achieve freedom and independence, including the recognition of a Palestinian State within the 1967 borders, as well as our resolve to live in our historic lands, our desire to do so in freedom and dignity, and our hope — which is renewed every day — to secure the safety and welfare of our people and of future generations.

However, the barbarism of the Israeli occupation is stealing the dreams and the future of the Palestinian people. All we have to do is describe what we have seen in the past few days to know this is true — a wheelchair-bound disabled Palestinian was shot by a sniper, a child was shot in the face, an entire battalion of soldiers surrounded an unarmed young man, and a brave girl was kidnapped from the arms of her parents in the middle of the night. When will this catastrophe end? When will we achieve our freedom and live in dignity, peace and security on our land — the land of our forebears and ancestors?

The world will be celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ over the next few days, but the lights will not be lit in the land of Christ, in Jerusalem, in Bethlehem or in Nazareth — as a response to attempts to eliminate the Palestinian, Arab, Christian and Islamic identity of the city and in affirmation of the unity of the Palestinian people around their cause. History has taken its position on colonialism and apartheid, on settlements and walls. The Palestinians cannot remain the sole hostage of tragic historical phases that humankind has now rejected. The Palestinians will continue to stand firm in the streets and alleys of Jerusalem, as their organic relationship with one another cannot be broken.

We note that the Palestinian people uphold the same values that States Members of the United Nations have come to this Hall to defend. I call upon them to vote in favour of the draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22 in order to make the voice of an inalienable right heard, in order to do what is right and just in recognition of the principles of international law and the Organization's own resolutions, and in order to combat attempts at fraud, blackmail and intimidation and wholly reject them. Those who want peace must vote for peace today.

Mr. Çavuşoğlu (Turkey): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's historic meeting of the General

Assembly. I would also like to welcome Mr. Riad Al-Malki, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine.

We have come together in this Hall so many times and said that the Palestinians had the right to live like the rest of us, the right to be free and secure, the right to be prosperous and the right to enjoy what is theirs. Yet our words did not effect any change. The illegal occupation continues and Palestinians cannot enjoy their basic rights. Generations of Palestinians are subject to systematic violence and discrimination. Today's vote is important to remind us that the Palestinians are not alone. This vote is important to show that the Palestinian cause is still our cause. Therefore, today, we will speak up for justice and peace. Today, we will speak up for Al-Quds — Jerusalem — the city of three divine faiths. We will show that different ethnicities and religions can coexist in peace in Palestine.

The Palestinians have a right to their own State based on 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. This is the main condition and only hope for a just and lasting peace in the region. However, the recent decision of a State Member of the United Nations to recognize Jerusalem, or Al-Quds, as the capital of Israel, violates international law, including all relevant United Nations resolutions. This decision is an outrageous assault on all universal values.

As the Summit Chair of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), we convened an extraordinary summit in Istanbul on 13 December. As the world's second-largest intergovernmental body, the OIC unanimously rejected the decision as null and void, in accordance with Security Council resolution 476 (1980), which censored, in the strongest terms, a similar decision taken by the Israeli parliament in 1980. The OIC also declared East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine.

Al-Quds — Jerusalem — is a holy city for all three monotheistic religions. It is the responsibility of all of humankind to preserve its historical status. Unilateral decisions on its status threaten the multi-ethnic and multicultural fabric of the city and undermine prospects for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. They thwart the prospects for a two-State solution. Regrettably, the Security Council failed to deliver on its responsibilities — once again through the exercise of the veto. Now, the duty falls upon the General Assembly to bring justice.

Before this meeting, a State Member of the United Nations threatened all the other Members. We were all asked to vote against draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22 or face the consequences. Some were even threatened with a cut in development aid. Such an attitude is unacceptable. This is bullying, and the Assembly will not stand for it. It is unethical to think that the words and dignity of Member States are for sale. Let me put it this way — we will not be intimidated. A country may be strong, but that does not make it right.

This is a critical moment in history. A vote in favour of the Palestinian people today will place us on the right side of history. We have cast such a vote before, when we granted Palestine the status of non-member Observer State at the United Nations, back in 2012. It is our sincere hope that this vote will pave the way for much-needed peace and justice in the Middle East. As a Chair of the OIC Summit, Turkey has submitted the draft resolution together with Yemen. We also requested, along with the League of Arab States, that the President of the General Assembly convene this emergency special session.

In conclusion, I affirm, on behalf of the entire Turkish nation, that Turkey will never let Al-Quds down. The Palestinian people will never be left alone. The world is bigger than five nations.

Mrs. Haley (United States of America): To its shame, the United Nations has long been a hostile place for the State of Israel. Both the current and the previous Secretaries-General have objected to the disproportionate focus of the United Nations on Israel. It is a wrong that undermines the credibility of the institution, and that, in turn, is harmful for the entire world.

I have often wondered why, in the face of such hostility, Israel has chosen to remain a Member of the Organization. Then I remember that Israel has chosen to remain in this institution because it is important to stand up for oneself. Israel must stand up for its own survival as a nation. But it also stands up for the ideals of freedom and human dignity that the United Nations is supposed to be about. Standing here today, being forced to defend the sovereignty and integrity of my country, the United States of America, many of the same thoughts have come to mind.

The United States is, by far, the single largest contributor to the United Nations and its agencies. We do this, in part, in order to advance our values and

our interests. When that happens, our participation in the United Nations produces great good for the world. Together, we feed, clothe and educate desperate people. We nurture and sustain fragile peace in conflict areas throughout the world. And we hold outlaw regimes accountable. We do this because it represents who we are. It is our American way.

But let me be honest. When we make generous contributions to the United Nations, we also have a legitimate expectation that our goodwill will be recognized and respected. When a nation is singled out for attack in this Organization, that nation is disrespected. What is more — that nation is asked to pay for the privilege of being disrespected. In the case of the United States, we are asked to pay more than anyone else for that dubious privilege. Unlike some United Nations Member countries, the United States Government is answerable to its people. As such, we have an obligation to acknowledge when our political and financial capital is being poorly spent. We have an obligation to demand more for investment and, if our investment fails, we have an obligation to spend our resources in more productive ways. Those are the thoughts that come to mind when we consider the draft resolution before us today (A/ES-10/L.22).

The arguments about the President's decision to move the American embassy to Jerusalem have already been made. They are by now well known. The decision was made in accordance with United States law dating back to 1995, and its position has been repeatedly endorsed by the American people ever since. The decision does not prejudge any final-status issues, including Jerusalem's boundaries. The decision does not preclude a two-State solution, if the parties agree to that. The decision does nothing to harm peace efforts. Rather, the President's decision reflects the will of the American people and our right as a nation to choose the location of our embassy. There is no need to describe it further.

Instead, there is a larger point to make. The United States will remember this day, in which it was singled out for attack in the General Assembly for the very act of exercising our right as a sovereign nation. We will remember it when we are called upon once again to make the world's largest contribution to the United Nations. And we will remember it when so many countries come calling on us, as they so often do, to pay even more and to use our influence for their benefit.

America will put its embassy in Jerusalem. That is what the American people want us to do, and it is the right thing to do. No vote in the United Nations will make any difference on that. But this vote will make a difference on how Americans look at the United Nations and on how we look at countries that disrespect us in the United Nations. And this vote will be remembered.

Mr. Danon (Israel): It is shameful for the United Nations that I must stand here today. It is shameful that this meeting is even taking place. Jerusalem is the holiest place on Earth for the Jewish people. It is the capital of the State of Israel, period. It is a fact that simply cannot be disputed. King David declared Jerusalem the city of the Jewish people 3,000 years ago. The Jewish Bible mentions Jerusalem 660 times. Our prayers recall Jerusalem's holy name over and over again. As our first Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion, said, Jerusalem "is an inseparable part of the history of Israel, of the faith of Israel".

I am holding right now an original coin. It dates from 67 C.E. It says, in Hebrew, "Freedom of Zion". I ask delegations to look in the envelopes in front of them. They will see that they have a replica of the coin. It is clear evidence from the time of our second temple. It proves the ancient connection of Jews to Jerusalem. Our bond to Jerusalem is unbreakable. No UNESCO declaration, no empty speeches, no General Assembly resolution will ever drive us from Jerusalem.

Those are the facts that this body does not want to hear. Those are the facts that this body wishes to ignore. So, today, I will tell members about another unbreakable bond — the unbreakable bond of hypocrisy between the Palestinians and the United Nations. Some have cautioned that the United States decision is one-sided and harmful to peace. The opposite is true. It is the one-sided steps of the Palestinians and the United Nations that have pushed peace away for years. With every anti-Israel resolution and every attack against my people, the United Nations has perfected its double standards.

We are now sitting in an emergency session of the General Assembly that has been open since 1997. We live in a world that is full of conflict and war, but only when it comes to Israel — the one true democracy in the Middle East — does the Assembly remain in a constant open session. How many times has Israel reached out its hand in peace since 1997? How many times have we offered the Palestinians to join us in dialogue? How

many times have these calls for peace been rejected? All of us have lost count.

When Prime Minister Barak offered the Palestinians a State in 2000, we were met with suicide bombers on our buses and shootings in our streets. In 2005, Prime Minister Sharon disengaged from Gaza. He removed every single Israeli home. There is not a single settlement — there is no occupation — to be found in Gaza any more. Since then, we have been attacked repeatedly with rockets and missiles aimed at our civilians. Yet the General Assembly has remained silent.

The United States simply stated a fact. It officially declared what has always been true — Jerusalem has been and always will be the capital of the State of Israel.

Those who support draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22 today are like puppets. They are puppets whose strings are pulled by their Palestinian puppetmasters. They are like marionettes forced to dance while the Palestinian leadership looks on with glee. They are blind to the light — unaware of the manipulators surrounding them, just like puppets. This vote is nothing more than a performance of delusion.

The Palestinians know that the draft resolution is a fraud. They know that it does absolutely nothing for the lives of the Palestinian people. They know that it will not create jobs for their people. They know that it will not provide better health care for the people of Ramallah or Gaza. No, this draft resolution is nothing more than a distraction. All that it will do is tell the Palestinians that they can continue to reject peace, and if the Assembly votes in favour of it, that is the view that will be sanctioned.

I thank those brave countries that do not support draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22. They have not fallen prey to the puppet show before us. They are the leaders that prove that no United Nations resolution can rewrite history. For, when a United Nations resolution designates Israel's presence in parts of Jerusalem as illegal, in reality, it designates the presence of the Jewish people at the Western Wall as illegal as well.

For thousands of years, Jews had only partial access to or were even completely banned from the Western Wall. Other nations, kingdoms and empires that occupied Jerusalem over the centuries had no respect for freedom of religion, but when Israel was founded we established a strong democracy. Our democracy is based on individual freedoms, one of which is the freedom of religion. And all these years later, our democracy and our commitment to those freedoms continue to thrive. We know that Jerusalem is sacred to billions of people around the world. Israel respects all religions and encourages everyone to visit and pray in the holy city.

There is a particular irony with respect to today's draft resolution. Countries that sponsor it — countries such as Yemen, where terror groups like Al-Qaida and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham have found fertile ground — accuse the United States and Israel of violating international law. The irony does not end there. In every other scenario, this body preaches human rights and peace, but not when it comes to Israel. In fact, the Assembly completely ignores the horrific acts of terror that threaten Israeli citizens. In the past two weeks alone we have seen 23 rocket attacks by Hamas against Israel, but we have heard nothing from the United Nations — no Security Council meeting or General Assembly emergency session was convened. The Palestinian Authority threatened violence and days of rage, but the United Nations expressed no condemnation.

Let me be clear. Violence and terror must never be tolerated. If this body were really uniting for peace, it would adopt a draft resolution condemning Palestinian violence. This draft resolution only encourages more violence and instability. It encourages the Palestinian leadership to continue on its dangerous path. The Assembly permits them to pursue violence in the name of Jerusalem — the city of Peace.

Israel is an optimistic country. We returned home after thousands of years in exile. We made the desert bloom and defended our country from countless attacks. Some 42 years ago, the General Assembly adopted a different, shameful resolution (resolution 3379 (XXX)), which equated Zionism with racism. It took 16 long years for that hateful resolution to be rescinded. I have no doubt that today's draft resolution will also end up in the trash bin of history. I have no doubt that the day will come when the entire international community will finally come to recognize Jerusalem as the eternal capital of the State of Israel.

Mr. Moncada Acosta (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to take the floor on

behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which, together with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the League of Arab States, requested that the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly be reconvened in the light of the latest developments on the question of Palestine, thereby stressing the importance that we accord to the future of its heroic people, as well as to the status of the city of Jerusalem. In particular, we take this opportunity to express our gratitude to you, Sir, for promptly responding to our request, which is in harmony with the call of the free nations of the world.

Likewise, it is important to highlight that this plenary meeting was called in accordance with the provisions of resolution 377 A (V), of 3 November 1950, entitled "Uniting for Peace", given that the Security Council remains silent and paralysed on the issue, despite its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, as was demonstrated last Monday, 18 December, when the delegation of the United States of America exercised its right of the veto in the voting on Security Council draft resolution S/2017/1060 on the status of the city of Jerusalem, introduced by the delegation of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries is deeply concerned about continued violations by Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied Palestinian territory, including attempts to alter the character, status and demographic composition of Jerusalem. In this regard, we condemn all violations of international law and provocations in the city, by whomsoever perpetrated and under whatever circumstances, while stressing that such actions are null and void and without legal validity pursuant to the relevant Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, we subscribe to all the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on Jerusalem, and we reiterate that the city is an integral part of the occupied Palestinian territory.

Further, the States members of the Movement express their deep concern about the plans announced on 6 December 2017 by the President of the United States of America, Donald Trump, to move that country's embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, as well as any other such action that would further consolidate Israel's control and unlawful de facto annexation of Jerusalem. We should like once again to warn that such provocations, which violate the relevant Security Council resolutions, will increase tensions and have potentially far-reaching repercussions. Accordingly, we call on the Government of the United States to end all violations and provocations, and recall the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, all the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, and all applicable provisions of international law, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Specifically, we recall Security Council resolutions 476 (1980) and 478 (1980), in which the Council, inter alia, clearly reconfirmed that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, that purport to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem have no legal validity and must be immediately rescinded. Resolution 478 (1980) also affirmed that the enactment of the Basic Law by Israel constitutes a violation of international law and decided not to recognize the Basic Law and such other actions by Israel that, as a result of that law, seek to alter the character and status of Jerusalem. Furthermore, it called on all Member States to accept that decision, while expressly calling on those States that have established diplomatic missions in Jerusalem to withdraw such missions from Jerusalem. Accordingly, we call for the full respect of the relevant Security Council resolutions and decisions, which are legally binding for all of us as States Members of the Organization.

The Movement warns that, given the extremely volatile situation and the diminishing prospects for achieving a just peace, all provocative, unlawful and unilateral actions in Jerusalem, as well as the pervasive threat of such actions, in addition to jeopardizing the possibility of achieving the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders, could seriously destabilize the fragile situation on the ground, with dangerous repercussions. The Movement therefore recalls Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), adopted almost a year ago, in which the Council underlined, inter alia, that it would not recognize any changes to the 4 June 1967 lines, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties through negotiations. It also called on both parties to refrain from provocative actions, incitement and inflammatory rhetoric, with the aim, inter alia, of de-escalating the situation on the ground; rebuilding trust and confidence, thereby demonstrating through policies and actions a genuine commitment to the two-State solution; and creating the conditions necessary for promoting peace.

Therefore, the States members of the Movement reaffirm their commitment to contributing to achieving a just, lasting and peaceful solution to the question of Palestine in all its aspects under international law. We therefore underline the urgency of undertaking joint efforts to promote peace and security through ending the Israeli occupation, begun more than 50 years ago in 1967, without further delay, and call for stepping up all international and regional efforts to that end, including those that are relevant to maintaining the viability of the two-State solution, based on the pre-1967 borders, in respect of the long-standing terms of reference of a peace settlement endorsed by the international community, pursuant to the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid principles, including the land-for-peace principle, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet road map. Moreover, it is important to stress that only a comprehensive solution to the question of Palestine will allow us to bring about the longed-for peace in the Middle East and finally end the Arab-Israeli conflict in its entirety.

In conclusion, the Movement reaffirms its long-standing support for and solidarity with the just cause of Palestine, and its strong commitment to continue supporting the heroic Palestinian people in their quest to achieve their inalienable rights and legitimate national aspirations, including their right to self-determination, freedom and independence in their independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, which is vital for the establishment of a just, comprehensive and sustainable peace.

I will share one last thought in my national capacity. Our message to the current Administration of the United States of America is the following: The world is not for sale, and its threats jeopardize world peace.

Ms. Lodhi (Pakistan): My delegation joins others in commending your decision, Mr. President, to promptly reconvene the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly on the question of Jerusalem.

In the face of this new challenge, wherein the unilateral actions of one country are set to undo decades of work of the international community and defy international law, this Parliament of Man and of the world is the right and appropriate forum to send a reassuring message to the suffering and long-oppressed people of Palestine, who have been losing hope of the possibility of securing a viable, contiguous and independent State of Palestine, as well as in the effectiveness of the United Nations to address their plight.

On behalf of the people and the Government of Pakistan, I reiterate that the United States decision to recognize Jerusalem as the so-called capital of Israel and relocate its embassy to the holy city constitutes a clear violation of international law, and is contrary to the provisions of several Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. We regret and reject this action and urge the United States to rescind its decision.

We find ourselves at one of history's turning points. The extraordinary developments of the past few weeks warrant an equally extraordinary response from us. We must uphold the prevalent and time-honoured norms, both legal and moral. We must also recommit to thwarting any and all attempts to violate the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the ultimate goal of a two-State solution.

My delegation believes that the United States veto earlier this week in the Security Council (see S/PV.8139) represents a dangerously misplaced strategy. The veto attempted to legitimize a declaration that is already null and void and lacks any legality. Through draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22, before us today, the rest of the world will say clearly and unambiguously that it cannot and will not be complicit in any act of illegality.

Support for the Palestinian cause and defence of Al-Quds Al-Sharif has been a pillar of my country's foreign policy. Our support remains and will always remain unwavering despite the kind of threats that we have received in recent days. My country has always demonstrated its solidarity with the Palestinian people and their legitimate aspirations. Our Parliament — both the Senate and the National Assembly — have unanimously echoed these sentiments. We all stand firmly behind the Palestinian people and support them in their just struggle.

I should like to recall that the first-ever stand-alone General Assembly resolution on Jerusalem, resolution 2253 (ES-V), adopted on 4 July 1967, at an emergency special session of the General Assembly (see A/PV.1548), was proudly led and sponsored by Pakistan. Today, equally proudly, Pakistan will join the rest of the international community in adopting this landmark draft resolution to collectively reject the revisionist decision of the United States. We have also co-sponsored the draft resolution.

In conclusion, let me say that a viable, independent and contiguous State of Palestine, based on internationally agreed parameters and the pre-1967 borders and with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, remains the only sustainable guarantee for securing an enduring peace in the Middle East. No other plan will ever constitute a just solution. No other plan will work. No other plan will succeed. And no other plan will be acceptable to us.

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): I wish to thank you, Sir, for convening today's critical session in response to the announcement by President Trump recognizing Al-Quds Al-Sharif as the capital of Israel and the relocation of the Embassy of the United States in Israel to the City of Jerusalem/Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

We also express appreciation to the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) for rapidly responding to the failure of the Security Council earlier this week to adopt draft resolution S/2017/1060 on this matter. We also thank the members of the Non-Aligned Movement for their strong support.

Indonesia's position, as expressed by our President at the OIC Islamic Summit Conference in Istanbul, is that the recognition by the United States of Jerusalem/Al-Quds Al-Sharif as the capital of Israel is unacceptable, and not only offends many peoples of the world but also is an affront to justice. This unilateral decision achieves nothing but to take us further away from the realization of the two-State solution and to make an independent Palestine seem increasingly remote if not impossible. In addition, the decision weakens an already vulnerable peace process and jeopardizes the efforts in pursuit of peace that the General Assembly has had to engage in for far too long. We therefore reiterate that the decision should be rejected. Furthermore, this unilateral recognition violates and undermines a number of resolutions of the Security Council and of the General Assembly and supports illegal acts committed by Israel in violation of international humanitarian and international human rights law.

All resolutions concerning the status of the Holy City of Jerusalem/Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the rest of the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel since 1967 must be respected without exception. Despite the international consensus recognizing the sensitivity of the issue of Jerusalem and its centrality to the peace process, we have unfortunately witnessed over the past few days statements disrespecting many resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

I should like briefly to recall history by quoting paragraph 5 (b) of Security Council resolution 478 (1980), which states that the Council calls upon "[t]hose States that have established diplomatic missions at Jerusalem to withdraw such missions from the Holy City". This 1980 Security Council resolution was adopted by 14 votes to none, with one abstention. It is still valid and will remain so until peace is achieved in Palestine.

Indonesia once again stresses its position that it does not accept any statement or action that dishonours the General Assembly and its achievements reflecting global recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, especially if such a statement or action is taken by one or two States alone. I should like to stress again that any attempt to change the character or status of the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, has no legal validity and is considered null and void. Any such attempt also constitutes a flagrant violation of international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of the two-State solution and a comprehensive peace.

Jerusalem/Al-Quds Al-Sharif is a final-status issue that must be resolved through negotiations between the two parties. It is up to us in this Hall, as peace-loving nations, to uphold the rule of law, justice and the dignity of multilateralism. We must show good faith and demonstrate our trust in the system for the maintenance of peace and security.

I call once again on all peace-loving nations to support the draft resolution that has been introduced by Yemen and Turkey on behalf of its many sponsors, including Indonesia. The Indonesian people have high expectations that the United Nations and its Member States, whose resolutions have been blatantly violated, will make the right decision and take a strong stand against any unilateral recognition contrary to international law. Indonesia also urges the States Members of the United Nations not to follow the unilateral action of the United States in relocating its embassy to Jerusalem. Indonesia is convinced that we can still rely on the United Nations to live up to the world's expectations.

Finally, let me once again assure my Palestinian brothers and sisters that Indonesia's support for the legitimate aspirations and rights of the people of

Palestine to live in freedom, peace, justice and dignity in their own homeland has been steadfast and will continue undiminished. As I stand here in this Hall representing the people of Indonesia, a sovereign country and one of the largest democracies in the world, a master of its own destiny and decisions, I once again reaffirm our strong and unwavering commitment to standing with the Palestinian people for their legitimate and inalienable rights. Our support will never cease or weaken.

Mr. Mohamed (Maldives): As a sponsor of draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22, my delegation wishes to thank the representative of Yemen for having introduced it in the General Assembly. We also thank Turkey and Palestine for their leadership in convening the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly to consider the status of Jerusalem. My Government applauds the visionary leadership that the President of the State of Palestine, Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, is demonstrating on this issue, and in particular Palestine's unwavering faith in the United Nations.

The present international system that emerged with the establishment of the United Nations is based on international law. It is a system in which nations of the world, from the greatest Powers to the smallest States, have all pledged under the Charter of the United Nations to respect, defend and abide by international law. Every State Member of the United Nations, including Israel, is bound to respect and to implement the resolutions of the Security Council in good faith.

The Security Council has declared in clear and simple terms that Israel's occupation of the State of Palestine is illegal, its annexation of East Jerusalem is illegal, and the decision by any country to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's so-called capital and the relocation of diplomatic missions to Jerusalem, are also illegal and should be construed by the international community as null and void.

It is reassuring to see that 14 out of the 15 members of the Security Council earlier this week voted to uphold international law with regard to the status of Jerusalem. The General Assembly, in adopting the draft resolution on Jerusalem today, will demonstrate the international consensus on the issue. The message to Israel and the handful of countries that support its illegal actions, is very clear: the international community is united in upholding the rule of law, and there is no place in the international system for the illegal occupation and annexation of a people's lands.

Israel needs to understand that the final status of Jerusalem can be decided only through a negotiated settlement and that any unilateral action to recognize Jerusalem would be in violation of international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions on this matter. This is an opportunity for Israel to make a strategic decision that will shape the future of its people and the people of the entire Middle East and beyond.

My Government appeals to Israel to withdraw from and end its illegal occupation of Palestine and help create the conditions for the establishment of an independent and sovereign State of Palestine that can coexist, side by side with Israel, within secure and recognized borders based on the 1967 lines, with East Jerusalem as its capital. This is the solution advanced by Security Council resolutions. The Maldives therefore calls on Israel to implement the relevant resolutions, fully respect its legal obligations undertaken in international agreements, and return immediately to a framework that could advance the Middle East peace process based on a two-State solution.

The centre of gravity in international politics is shifting towards the rule of law. No Power is too great to ignore this reality, as the draft resolution we will adopt today will crystallize. And the Maldives will continue to work to ensure that this reality is sustained over time, as we hope to be elected to the Security Council for the term 2019-2020. We will work with every Member State to ensure that the United Nations remains the key actor in finding a lasting solution for the people of Palestine and in crafting a shared solution for a shared destiny for all of us.

Mr. Mounzer (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic condemns the decision of the United States of America to move its Embassy to the occupied city of Al-Quds and to recognize it as the capital of the Israeli occupation. It reiterates that such decisions are a flagrant breach of the legal, historical and political status of the city of Al-Quds and nothing but a part of the criminal usurpation of Palestine and the displacement of its people with a view to establishing that colonialist occupying entity on its territory.

These decisions taken by the Administration of the President of the United States is a flagrant violation of resolutions of the Security Council and of the General

Assembly calling on Israel to withdraw from the territories that it occupied in 1967, including Al-Quds. These decisions are therefore mere unilateral actions that have no legitimacy or impact on the legal status of the city of Al-Quds. However, their gravity lies in the fact that they constitute an official declaration of the United States Administration that the country is not and will not be a neutral party or qualified mediator in any effort to reach a peaceful settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Syrian Arab Republic vehemently condemns the recent exercise of the veto in the Security Council by the United States against draft resolution S/2017/1060, on the status of Al-Quds. This action provided further confirmation of the disdain of the United States for international law, in flagrant violation of international legitimacy. It also unmasked its limitless support for the racist and colonialist entity, to the detriment of the rights of the Palestinian people.

Despite the immense challenges of the terrorist war we are enduring, the Syrian Arab Republic will never renounce our unwavering position on the question of Palestine and the rights of Christians, Palestinians and Muslims in Al-Quds Al-Sharif. My country's Government will spare no effort in order to recover all occupied Arab territories. The Syrian Arab Republic has stood and continues to stand firm on its position of principle supporting the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of its independent State on the entirety of its national territory, with Al-Quds as its capital. We also support the right of return of Palestinian refugees pursuant to resolution 194 (III) of 1948. While the Syrian Arab Republic welcomes the decision to grant the State of Palestine non-member observer State status at the United Nations, we call for the State of Palestine to be granted full membership in the Organization with full rights.

In conclusion, we reiterate our call on the United Nations to assume its responsibilities in implementing the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and of the General Assembly with a view to ending the suffering of the Palestinian people and the Israeli occupation of Arab territories, and to establish a Palestinian State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. The ongoing events irrefutably demonstrate that the United States of America is not interested in a fair and comprehensive settlement to the conflict to the Arab-Israeli conflict. They also show that the arrogance of that country has risen to the level of threatening and intimidating States should they stand with the Palestinian people and defend the resolutions of international legitimacy.

What kind of peace can we hope for from a super-Power that treats the United Nations as if it were one of its national institutions and considers its Member States to be schoolchildren to be punished when they fail to yield to its authority and hegemony?

Mr. Bin Momen (Bangladesh): We thank you, Sir, for resuming the tenth emergency special session under the "Uniting for Peace" procedure pursuant to General Assembly resolution 377 (V), of 1950.

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Our President attended the sixth extraordinary session of the OIC Islamic Summit Conference, convened by President Erdoğan in Istanbul on 13 December 2017, to articulate our views on the Middle East peace process, including the question of East Jerusalem. Our Prime Minister also reaffirmed our unequivocal position on East Jerusalem as the capital of an independent and viable State of Palestine.

Bangladesh remains deeply concerned over any decision or announcement that may compromise the status of East Jerusalem as a final-status issue in the Middle East peace process and contribute to changing its historical and legal status, its demographic structure and its historic Arab-Islamic character. We remain concerned over the possible grave consequences and threats to international peace and security that could be inflamed by any such decision and action, raising new waves of tension, hostility and violent extremism in an already-volatile Middle East that are likely to spill over to other parts of the world.

Bangladesh stresses the need to preserve the legal status of Jerusalem within the framework of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, including relevant Security Council resolutions. Bangladesh reaffirms its position in favour of establishing the State of Palestine based on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. Bangladesh urges all parties concerned to take a pragmatic approach to the Middle East peace process in reaching a two-State solution for enduring peace and stability in the region. As Bangladesh strives to deal with the continuing massive influx of forcibly displaced people from Myanmar's Rakhine state, we continue to associate ourselves with any call

or initiative to bring to closure protracted conflicts that continue to foment indignation, intolerance and mindless violence threatening to spare no one in the international community.

Bangladesh supports the draft resolution, in keeping with our constitutional obligation, our long-standing principled position on the question of Palestine and our commitment to international peace and stability and to the principles of international law.

Mrs. Rodríguez Camejo (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba fully endorses the statement delivered by the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We also support the statements delivered by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and by the representative of Yemen on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

My country's position on the question before us today is steadfast, as clearly reflected in the statement by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Cuba on the recognition by the United States of the city of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, issued on 6 December 2017. In this regard, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba expressed its deepest concern at and rejection of the unilateral declaration by the President of the United States of the city of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, which constitutes a serious and flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

The intention of the Government of the United States to alter Jerusalem's historical status undermines the legitimate interests of the Palestinian people and of Arab and Islamic nations. It will provoke serious consequences for stability and security in the Middle East and further exacerbate tensions in the region and hinder efforts to resume Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Cuba calls on the Security Council to uphold the responsibilities entrusted to it under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security, take the necessary decisions and demand that Israel immediate bring to an end its occupation of the Palestinian territories and its policies of aggression and colonialist practices, as well as that it comply with resolutions of the General Assembly on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs reiterated that Cuba will continue to support a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, based on two States, that respects the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the ability to enjoy an independent and sovereign State, within the pre-1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital.

In conclusion, I should simply like to add that, in accordance with its established principled position on this issue, Cuba is among the sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/ES-10/L.22, entitled "Status of Jerusalem", and will, of course, vote in favour of it.

Mr. Khoshroo (Islamic Republic of Iran): Over the past several decades, the Israeli regime has continuously committed a host of crimes by occupying Palestinian land and killing and displacing Palestinians while enjoying total impunity. The United States has aided and abetted throughout by providing its unconditional support and defending the Israeli regime in all ways. The Government of the United States has never hesitated to misuse its veto power in the Security Council, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, to shield the Israeli regime from the will of the international community.

Three days ago, when the United States vetoed a draft Security Council resolution (see S/PV.8139), it was the forty-third time the United States had exercised its veto power to protect Israel from facing the consequences of its heinous crimes and blocked efforts by the members of the international community to find a solution to the question of Palestine. The recent illegal decision by the United States Administration to recognize Al-Quds as the capital of the Israeli regime and to move its embassy to this holy city has made it crystal clear that the United States is interested only in securing the maximum interests of the Israeli regime and harbours no respect for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination.

The question of Palestine has been on the agenda of the United Nations since the Organization's early years. Further, the international community has rightfully recognized the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people for many decades. The Israeli occupation lies at the centre of all crises and conflicts in the Middle East and beyond — a fact long acknowledged by the United Nations. The appalling tragedy and abiding wound of

our region over the past 100 years, which began with the conspiracy of the Balfour Declaration, has entered a new phase with the politically incorrect, illegal and unlawful promise of the President of the United States to move the American Embassy to the holy city of Al-Quds. We strongly condemn this reckless unilateral act by the United States to distort the historical facts and replace them with fictions. That Administration has done little to hide its intentions to shift the focus of the Security Council from the question of Palestine to fabricated alternative issues in our region in order to give the Israeli regime more space to freely pursue its criminal policies and practices.

In that intention, the United States has stressed several times in Security Council open debates on the situation of the Middle East that the United States no longer subscribes to the internationally shared belief that the question of Palestine is the Council's priority in the region. Such reprehensible statements are parts of a bigger plot to legitimize the Israeli occupation and expansionist policies and practices, which violate not only each and every norm of international law, but also the teachings of all divine religions and prophets that are based on justice and compassion.

The Member States have never paid heed to this delusional desire. This meeting of the General Assembly, as well as the recent Security Council meeting on the issue (see S/PV.8139), are clear manifestations that the United States plan has failed and that the occupation of Palestine and Al-Quds stand at the centre of all conflicts in the Middle East.

Palestine is in the hearts and minds of all Muslims and all peace-loving nations around the globe. Denying this fact is equal to being complicit with the illegal Israeli occupation and actions and ignoring the human conscience. The Islamic Republic of Iran expresses its solidarity with the oppressed people of Palestine during this difficult time.

Mr. Shen Bo (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Palestinian question is at the core of the situation in the Middle East and a fundamental problem bearing on peace in the region. The status of Jerusalem stands out as an especially complex and sensitive aspect of any settlement to the Palestinian question. A large number of resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council contain provisions on the status of Jerusalem. In the current circumstances, we call on the international community to remain united in its joint efforts to pursue peace and to facilitate the de-escalation of the situation with respect to Jerusalem in the higher interests of stability, tranquility and the Middle East peace process.

The two-State solution is the correct path towards a political settlement of the Palestinian question. The international community needs to build on the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, the principle of land for peace and the Arab Peace Initiative and to scale up its efforts to facilitate the resumption of negotiations, settle such crucial issues as the final status of Jerusalem and achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Palestinian question. China firmly supports and facilitates the Middle East peace process. We support the just cause of the Palestinian people in recovering their national legal rights and establishing an independent State of Palestine based on the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital and in full sovereignty. China's position in that regard will never change.

In July, President Xi Jinping of China put forward a four-point proposal on the settlement of the Palestinian question, including the promotion of a political process based on the two-State solution; adherence to a vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security; the further coordination of international efforts to enhance synergy for peace; and the promotion of peace in a holistic approach and through development. China will continue to play its constructive role in promoting a political solution to the Palestinian question in the interests of peace, stability and development in the Middle East.

Mr. Yaakob (Malaysia): At the outset, I wish to extend my appreciation and commend you, Sir, for the timely convening of this important emergency special session following the failure of the Security Council to adopt a similar draft resolution on Jerusalem, introduced by Egypt on Monday, 18 December (see S/PV.8139). Allow me to also extend my delegation's appreciation to Yemen for introducing draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22, on the status of Jerusalem, at this session.

My delegation wishes to align itself with the statement made by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Malaysia joins the international community in expressing our deep concern and rejecting the decision of the United States to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and relocate its Embassy from Tel

Aviv to Jerusalem. Such a move undermines efforts to find a comprehensive, just and durable solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It has caused dismay and frustration among a majority of Member States, particularly the Palestinians and within the Muslim world, including those that wish to see peace, stability and security in the region. It is also an infringement of the Palestinian people's rights and their right to self-determination.

The decision goes against relevant Security Council resolutions, such as resolutions 478 (1980) and 2334 (2016). They have laid the foundations of the peace process that affirmed the city of Jerusalem as a final-status issue that must be resolved through bilateral negotiations between Palestine and Israel in the framework of the two-State solution.

The issue of Al-Quds Al-Sharif is at the heart of the Palestinian cause. The recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel endorses Israel's brutal occupation and repressive policies, which have caused immense suffering to the Palestinian people. We are concerned that this dire situation will only feed into the agenda of the extremists and frustrate our collective efforts towards our greater objective of combating terrorism and ending the vicious cycle of violence.

The impasse in the Middle East peace process needs pragmatic solutions based on international law and norms, and we hope that the United States can make a helpful contribution by rescinding its decision and shouldering its responsibility to help achieve a comprehensive and lasting peace on the basis of the two-State solution. Malaysia continues to believe that a two-State solution, with the Palestinians and Israelis living side by side in peace, based on the pre-1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine, is the only viable solution to this long-lasting conflict.

Mr. Ja (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The international community is strengthening its cooperation more than ever in order to put an end to the confrontation and dispute between Palestine and Israel, which have lasted for over half a century, and to ensure lasting peace in the Middle East.

At the seventeenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Venezuela in September, the Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their commitment to defending the interests of developing countries involving issues directly related to world peace and security, such as the situation in the Middle East, including the question of Palestine, by promoting multilateralism and especially by strengthening the key role of the United Nations. Furthermore, in December 2016 the Security Council adopted resolution 2334 (2016), urging Israel to stop the illegal construction of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and East Al-Quds.

The decision of United States President Trump to recognize Al-Quds as the capital of Israel and to move the United States Embassy there well deserves global condemnation and rejection, as it is in open defiance of and an insult to international legitimacy and the unanimous will of international society. The status of Al-Quds remains so sensitive that it must certainly be settled fairly by means of restoring the national rights of the Palestinian people and achieving a comprehensive and lasting resolution to the Middle East problem.

The United States and Israel bear full responsibility for all the consequences of the tension and instability that will arise in the Middle East region owing to that reckless and high-handed act. The United States and Israel should pay due attention to the efforts of the international community to resolve the issue of the Middle East, including the question of Palestine, in conformity with international law and other relevant Security Council resolutions for the benefit of the Palestinian and Arab people, and attend to the Middle East peace process with honesty and diligence.

My delegation takes this opportunity to reiterate its support for and encouragement to the struggle of the Palestinian people to regain their legitimate right to establish an independent State with East Al-Quds as its capital, and to the struggle of the Arab people for their cause of justice.

Mr. Zaayman (South Africa): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. South Africa's position with regard to Jerusalem is a principled one that is represented in the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. We believe that Jerusalem is a final-status issue to be resolved through direct negotiations between the two parties on the basis of the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. That informed our decision to support and co-sponsor draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

South Africa is deeply concerned that the unilateral action of the United States to recognize Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel undermines the progress that has been registered within the context of the Middle East peace process. We believe that the peace process seeks to secure a lasting, sustainable peace between the State of Israel and the State of Palestine. We believe the decision of the United States Government to relocate the United States Embassy to Jerusalem is regrettable and is not constructive in advancing a sustainable solution through the Middle East peace process.

The South African Government remains in favour of a two-State solution for Palestine and Israel, based on the international recognition and independence of the State of Palestine, based on the 4 June 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital and with the peoples of Palestine and Israel existing peacefully, side by side, in two independent States.

We also recall all United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 476 (1980) and 478 (1980), by which the Council, inter alia, reconfirmed that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, that purported to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem had no legal validity and must be rescinded forthwith; affirmed that the enactment of the Basic Law by Israel constituted a violation of international law; decided not to recognize the Basic Law and such other actions by Israel that, as a result of the law, sought to alter the character and status of Jerusalem; and called upon all Member States to accept that decision and those States that had established diplomatic missions at Jerusalem to withdraw such missions from the holy city. In this regard, we call for the full respect of the relevant Security Council resolutions and decisions.

South Africa continues to believe that the best option for the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict is premised upon, first, the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independence, which entails a principled position against the military occupation of the Palestinian people and their land; secondly, the right of the peoples of both Israel and Palestine to live side by side in peace in their own States, within internationally recognized borders; thirdly, a belief that there can be no military solution to the conflict and that peaceful negotiation is the only means of ensuring lasting peace, security and stability; and fourthly, a commitment to multilateralism in order to secure a sustainable solution and a rules-based international order.

Finally, we appeal to the Government of the United States of America to reconsider its decision to relocate its Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, as such a move compromises and undermines the principles of a two-State solution based on peaceful coexistence between the peoples of Israel and Palestine.

The President: I now call on the observer of the observer State of the Holy See.

Monsignor Grysa (Holy See): The delegation of the Holy See wishes to express its appreciation to Member States for their commitment to averting new rounds of violence and to promoting dialogue and negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians on the peace process and the question of Jerusalem. At the same time, it wishes to recall the obligation of all nations to respect the historical status quo of the holy city, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

The unique identity of Jerusalem, which is of universal interest, consists in its particular nature as a holy city most sacred to the three monotheistic religions and a symbol for millions of believers worldwide who consider it to be their spiritual capital. Its significance goes beyond the question of borders, and that reality should be considered as a priority in every negotiation for a political solution.

The Holy See therefore calls for a peaceful resolution that respects the nature of Jerusalem, its sacredness and universal value, and reiterates that only an internationally guaranteed status can preserve its unique character and be an assurance of dialogue and reconciliation for peace in the region.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22, entitled "Status of Jerusalem".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. Pollard (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in document A/ES-10/L.22, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam,

the Comoros, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Gambia, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the State of Palestine.

I should also like to inform delegations that Mali has withdrawn its sponsorship.

The President: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Against:

Guatemala, Honduras, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, Togo, United States of America

Abstaining:

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Bahamas, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, Haiti, Hungary, Jamaica, Kiribati, Latvia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Rwanda, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Uganda, Vanuatu

Draft resolution A/ES-10/L.22 was adopted by 128 votes to 9, with 35 abstentions (resolution ES-10/19).

[Subsequently, the delegation of San Marino informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The President: Before giving the floor to those who wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting, I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Lind (Estonia): I deliver this explanation of vote after the voting on behalf of the following European Union member States: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom, as well as on behalf of Albania, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

We reiterate our firm commitment to the two-State solution, and in this context the position of our States on Jerusalem remains unchanged. The aspirations of both parties must be fulfilled and a way must be found through negotiations to resolve the status of Jerusalem as the future capital of both States. We will continue to respect the international consensus on Jerusalem embodied in, inter alia, Security Council resolution 478 (1980), including on the location of their diplomatic representations, until the final status of Jerusalem is resolved.

Recognizing the special significance of the holy sites of Jerusalem, we strongly believe that the status quo for the Temple Mount/Al-Haram Al-Sharif must be upheld in line with previous understandings and with respect to Jordan's special role.

Our countries will continue to work tirelessly with the parties, regional and international partners, not least within the Middle East Quartet, to promote a return to a meaningful process towards a negotiated two-State solution, in line with known parameters, towards a peace that can be sustained. A negotiated two-State solution that fulfils the aspirations of both sides is the only realistic way to bring the lasting peace and security that Israelis and Palestinians alike deserve.

Ms. Bird (Australia): Australia has a long-standing commitment to a two-State solution in the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. This has been articulated at the highest levels of the Australian Government and reconfirmed in recent weeks.

There is much in resolution ES-10/19 with which we agree. We agree that Jerusalem is a final-status issue to be resolved through negotiations, and Australia will maintain its diplomatic representation to Israel in Tel Aviv and its representation to the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah. We also agree with the call for an intensification of efforts aimed at achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace. Australia does not support unilateral action on the part of either side of this conflict; we consider that such actions undermine the peace process.

We do not, however, consider that this further resolution — in addition to the many on the peace process adopted by the General Assembly each year — helps bring the parties back to the negotiating table. We do not wish to see any party isolated from the process, and so we abstained in the voting on this occasion.

We also wish to see the United States of America continue to play a leadership role in seeking a resolution to the conflict. Although we are under no illusions that finding a resolution to the conflict will be easy, our firm and sincere hope is that Israel and the Palestinians will return to the negotiating table as soon as possible, and we continue to encourage them to do so.

Mr. Arriola Ramírez (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Paraguay abstained in the voting on resolution ES-10/19, on the status of Jerusalem, in the light of the fact that this issue is under consideration by the Security Council, the organ entrusted by the Charter of the United Nations with maintaining international peace and security.

The Government of Paraguay reaffirms its long-standing position that this issue must be resolved through direct negotiations between the parties, leading to the establishment of two States living side by side in peace within secure and recognized borders.

Mr. Escalante Hasbún (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to make this statement in explanation of vote on resolution ES-10/19, entitled "Status of Jerusalem", just adopted at this emergency special session of the General Assembly. In particular, I reiterate El Salvador's continued support for a negotiated settlement based on a two-State solution in which Israelis and Palestinians can live together in harmony, within the framework of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and pursuant to all the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Over the past several year, as reflected in all the relevant resolutions introduced in the various Committees and the General Assembly, El Salvador has remained consistent in its support for this cause. Without impugning the content of the resolution just adopted, introduced jointly by the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, we note the increasingly frequent practice of submitting texts for the consideration of the General Assembly membership without allowing for the minimum time needed for prior discussion, including in cases in which draft resolutions are put to the vote.

We believe that the introduction of draft resolutions before the General Assembly must be predicated upon a minimum amount of open consultations with all States Members of the Organization, irrespective of and without prejudice to the emergency nature of this session. El Salvador believes that such a failure to allow room for prior and open discussions within the General Assembly cannot be allowed to set a precedent for carrying out the work of the most representative body of our Organization. Therefore, without undermining the position that it might have taken as a consequence of consultations on the text, El Salvador decided to abstain in the voting to express its disapproval of the process.

We reiterate once again that our vote should cast no doubt on our support for dialogue and multilateralism as the only path leading to the settlement of conflicts and dealing with global challenges, or on El Salvador's

appeal to all the involved parties to step up consultations, dialogue and mulitlateralism so as to move closer towards concrete solutions on the ground.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina abstained in the voting on resolution ES-10/19 at this resumed emergency special session as we believe that it will not help to advance a resolution of the conflict between the parties. That does not imply a change in Argentina's position with regard to the fundamental issue. Argentina once again reiterates its firm support for a peaceful, definitive and comprehensive solution to the question of Palestine, based on the two-State solution within the pre-1967 borders, and to be determined by the outcome of negotiations between the parties.

Argentina firmly supports all efforts aimed at bringing peace and stability to the Middle East. We urge regional stakeholders and countries friendly to Israel and Palestine to contribute constructively to helping the parties move forward in settling their differences so as to resume negotiations. That demands our collective effort in working to achieve the two-State solution pursuant to the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, and as set out by the road map and Arab Peace Initiative.

Mr. Jinga (Romania): Romania underlines the need for a just and long-lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the implementation of the two-State solution with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security as the only viable solution capable of ensuring the fulfilment of both sides' aspirations. Jerusalem represents a central issue in peace negotiations, and its status must be decided by a direct agreement between the two parties involved, as underlined by both the European Union and the United Nations, as well as the United States Administration.

Romania's position concerning the status of the city of Jerusalem complies with the relevant provisions of international law and the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. Expressing its concern about the possible negative repercussions with regard to the security climate in the Middle East, Romania calls for calm and encourages the parties to resume direct dialogue so as to move forward the peace process. We believe that the time has come to revive international efforts so as to relaunch the peace process in the Middle East, and, in that regard, we look cautiously towards the moment of implementing resolution ES-10/19.

Mr. Blanchard (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Canada chose to abstain in the voting. Canada remains firmly committed to achieving a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East that includes the establishment of a Palestinian State living side by side with the State of Israel in peace and security. As has been its long-standing position, Canada believes that the status of Jerusalem is part of the final status issue, and that the question of the status of Jerusalem can be settled only within the framework of a comprehensive settlement of the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada continues to support establishing the conditions necessary for the parties to find a peaceful solution. We are disappointed that resolution ES-10/19 is one-sided and does not advance the prospects for peace to which we aspire, which is why we abstained in the voting today.

We also take this opportunity to emphasize the importance of the city of Jerusalem to three monotheistic religions. Denying the connection linking Jerusalem and the Jewish, Muslim and Christian faiths undermines the integrity of the site for all. We also reiterate the need to maintain the status quo at Jerusalem's holy sites. Canada calls for calm,and firmly condemns the violence, terrorism and targeting of civilians witnessed during the past several weeks.

Mr. Hermida Castillo (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): In explanation of its vote in favour of resolution ES-10/19, Nicaragua expresses its deep concern about and rejection of recent unilateral actions aimed at modifying the character, status and demographic composition of Jerusalem, in flagrant violation of the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), which clearly states that no changes to the 4 June 1967 lines will be legally recognized, including with regard to East Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties.

It is regrettable that Security Council draft resolution S/2017/1060, on the status of Jerusalem, introduced by Egypt on 18 December, was not adopted by the Council, which resulted in the voice of the international community being ignored and established a dangerous precedent for matters of peace and international law. Resolving the question of Palestine and the status of Jerusalem urgently requires fully committed and determined negotiations in line with the relevant United Nations resolutions. Nicaragua reiterates that

such unilateral actions jeopardize international peace and security in that region and increasingly move us farther away from finding a solution to the situation in the Middle East.

It is necessary to avoid any measure that might hinder the establishment of two States. The only solution involves the establishment of two States — a State of Israel and a State of Palestine within the pre-1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine — whereby both countries are able to coexist in full enjoyment of their aspirations, security, cooperation, harmony and lasting peace, and both States and peoples enjoy the same right to peace, security and sustainable development.

As a peace-loving country respectful of international law, Nicaragua reiterates its full support for all initiatives aimed at dialogue and negotiations leading to peace, unity and cooperation in the region. We call for stepping up efforts to finding a solution to the question of Palestine at the national, regional and international levels.

Mr. Gómez Camacho (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico abstained in the voting because it is concerned about the way in which the legitimate search for peace between Palestine and Israel has been distorted. Today, we are farther away from, rather than closer to, reaching an agreement. Mexico does not believe a unilateral declaration recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel to be positive or useful in terms of the peace process. However, convening a Uniting for Peace or emergency special session of the General Assembly to condemn such a declaration is neither a useful or proportionate reaction. The United States must be part of the solution to the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis and not be made into an additional problem that hinders progress. We call on all sides to exercise calm and reason.

Mexico supports dialogue as the means to settle the conflict between Israel and Palestine, based on the two-State solution, which includes the right of Israel and Palestine to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized borders, as agreed in the Oslo accords and endorsed by the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. Israel must respect the character and the special status of the holy city of Jerusalem and preserve the unique spiritual and religious attributes of the city's sacred sites.

As it has done thus far, Mexico, like other countries that enjoy diplomatic relations with Israel, will keep its embassy in Tel Aviv pursuant to Security Council resolution 478 (1980), as well as to the relevant General Assembly resolutions concerning the status of Jerusalem. We recall that Jerusalem is also an integral part of Palestine, and the eastern part of that city should therefore be its capital. Mexico reiterates its firm conviction that a political and peaceful solution to the conflict must take place through direct negotiations without preconditions between the parties that resolve the substantive issues, including the final status of Jerusalem.

Mr. Ellinger (Czech Republic): The Czech Republic fully supports the common European Union position on Jerusalem, as articulated in the most recent statement by the European Council. Nevertheless, we decided to abstain in the voting today because, in our view, resolution ES-10/19 does not contribute to the Middle East peace process. On the contrary, it contributes to widening the differences between both sides — the Israelis and the Palestinians. The Czech Republic firmly believes that it is important to reach an outcome regarding the issue of Jerusalem at the negotiating table.

Mr. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia): Armenia has already expressed its position on the status of Jerusalem and has not changed it. The status of Jerusalem is one of the most important issues on the international agenda and should be determined through negotiations within the context of solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that are acceptable to the parties. That could pave the way for the establishment of lasting peace and security.

Jerusalem has a centuries-old Armenian presence and rich Armenian historical and cultural heritage. The Armenian Apostolic Church is one of the major guardians of Christian holy sites. We are therefore attentively following all developments with regard to Jerusalem. We took note of the positions on Jerusalem expressed earlier and recognize that they do not prejudice the determination of its final status through negotiations.

Ms. Bogyay (Hungary): The position of the Hungarian Government has been consistent. Hungary does not comment on the foreign-policy decisions of the United States Administration. The position of the

Hungarian Government regarding the Middle East peace process remains unchanged.

Mr. Mažeiks (Latvia): Latvia's position remains unchanged. Latvia believes that peace in the Middle East can be achieved through the two-State solution to be realized through Israeli-Palestinian talks, while taking into account the interests of both sides. Latvia believes that the status of Jerusalem must be decided through direct talks, and Jerusalem must become the capital of the two States. Within the European Union (EU), Latvia, together with other EU member States and institutions, will pursue an active dialogue in order to find a positive outcome to the Middle East process. It is important not to escalate tensions in the political and security situation in the region. Latvia does not believe that resolution ES-10/19 will contribute to determining the status of Jerusalem, and therefore abstained in the voting.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.